

REMARKS

This paper is responsive to any paper(s) indicated above, and is responsive in any other manner indicated below.

PENDING CLAIMS

Claims 1-23, 26, 27 and 29-31 were pending, under consideration and subjected to examination in the Office Action. Appropriate claims have been amended, canceled and/or added (without prejudice or disclaimer) in order to adjust a clarity and/or focus of Applicant's claimed invention. Such changes are unrelated to any prior art or scope adjustment and are simply cancellation of any disputed claim(s) (without prejudice or disclaimer) to obtain a patent (without prejudice or disclaimer) on any allowable claim(s) as quickly as possible. Any disputed claim(s) may be pursued within a continuing application. At entry of this paper, Claims 1-5, 7-17, 19-23, 26, 27 and 29 will be pending for further consideration and examination in the application.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS OBVIATED VIA CLAIM AMENDMENT

Claims 1, 13, 26 and 19 have been objected to because of the Office Action concerns listed within the sections numbered "1" and "2" on page 2 of the Office Action. As amendments have been made where appropriate in order to address each of the Office Action listed concerns, reconsideration and withdrawal of the claim objection are respectfully requested.

REWRITTEN ALLOWABLE CLAIM(S)

Claims 3, 6, 7, 15, 16, 18 and 19 have been indicated as being allowable if rewritten, as indicated within the section numbered "4" on page 10 of the Office Action. Features/limitations of ones of the allowable dependent claims have been incorporated into each of the independent claim(s) 1, 13, 26, 27 and 29, thereby rendering such rewritten independent claim(s) and any claims dependent therefrom allowable, i.e., all of presently-pending claims 1-5, 7-17, 19-23, 26, 27 and 29 should be allowable as presently rewritten. In view of the incorporation of the features/limitations of claims 6 and 18 into the independent claims, such allowable dependent claims have been canceled (without prejudice or disclaimer) to avoid redundant claims. Further, ones of the claims have been minorly amended (e.g., to improve clarity, correct antecedents, remove extraneous portions) within this paper in a manner believed not to affect an allowability thereof. Reconsideration and renewal of the allowance are respectfully requested. Applicant and the undersigned respectfully thank the Examiner for such indication of allowable subject matter.

35 USC '102 REJECTION - OBSOLETE VIA CLAIM AMENDMENT

The 35 USC '102 rejection of ones of Applicant's claims as being anticipated by Sekine et al. ('481) is respectfully traversed, but the present amendment of such claims (without prejudice or disclaimer) to obtain a patent (without prejudice or disclaimer) on the features/limitations of the allowable claims as quickly as possible, has rendered such rejection(s) obsolete. Thus gratuitous traversal arguments concerning the rejection(s) are omitted for brevity. Further discussions/arguments concerning such rejection(s) are left for the future if/when appropriate. Based upon

the following, reconsideration and withdrawal of such rejection(s) are respectfully requested.

The above statements, or any present cancellation of claims (without prejudice or disclaimer), should not be taken as an indication or admission that the rejection was valid, or as a disclaimer of any scope or subject matter, but is merely use of a procedural approach to obtain a patent (without prejudice or disclaimer) on ones of the allowable claims as quickly as possible.

ALL CLAIMS IN CONDITION FOR ALLOWANCE

In view of the fact that all prior art rejected claims have now been amended without prejudice or disclaimer, and in view of the fact that all remaining claims have been rewritten to include the features/limitations indicated as being allowable, it is respectfully submitted that all presently pending claims are now in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance with respect to the present application is respectfully requested.

EXAMINER INVITED TO TELEPHONE

The Examiner is herein invited to telephone the undersigned attorneys at the local Washington, D.C. area telephone number of 703/312-6600 for discussing any Examiner's Amendments or other suggested actions for accelerating prosecution and moving the present application to allowance.

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

It is respectfully submitted that any and all claim amendments and/or cancellations submitted within this paper and throughout prosecution of the present application are without prejudice or disclaimer. That is, any above statements, or any present amendment or cancellation of claims (all made without prejudice or disclaimer), should not be taken as an indication or admission that any objection/rejection was valid, or as a disclaimer of any scope or subject matter. Applicant respectfully reserves all rights to file subsequent related application(s) (including reissue applications) directed to any/all previously claimed limitations/features which have been subsequently amended or cancelled, or to any/all limitations/features not yet claimed, i.e., Applicant continues (indefinitely) to maintain no intention or desire to dedicate or surrender any limitations/features of subject matter of the present application to the public.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims listed above as presently being under consideration in the application are now in condition for allowance.

To the extent necessary, Applicant petitions for an extension of time under 37 CFR '1.136. Authorization is herein given to charge any shortage in the fees, including extension of time fees and excess claim fees, to Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Case No. 520.41064X00) and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Based upon all of the foregoing, allowance of all presently-pending claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

ANTONELLI, TERRY, STOUT & KRAUS, LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul J. Skwierawski". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "S".

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